

## REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed December 29, 2003, the Examiner noted that claims 16, 29 and 45 were pending, and rejected all claims. Claims 16, 29 and 45 have been amended, and, thus, in view of the forgoing claims 16, 29 and 45 remain pending for reconsideration which is requested. No new matter has been added. The Examiner's rejections are traversed below.

Page 2 of the Office Action rejected all claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Bessho and Abe or Wang and Abe.

Bessho is directed to a character recognition method using a ruled line deleting method (see S118 of Fig. 10 and col. 11, lines 32-35) that deletes a ruled line based on black run length and the coordinates of line segments having a predetermined black run length.

Wang is directed to a system that discriminates text lines in a document. The document image is divided into columns rectangular areas in the columns. The areas whose heights are shorter than 3 pixels or taller than the average height times a tolerance factor are deleted (see col. 5, line 65 - col. 6, line 10).

Abe (see fig. 1C, col. 4, lines 4-9 and col. 13, lines 54-61) is directed to deleting line segments and predetermined patterns in picture data from an optical scanner. The system determines adjoining relationships between several vertical and horizontal line segments and determines the size and locations of each table, block and line pattern in the document based on the particular segments that cross, connect or form corners. Abe extracts characters and deletes all mutually joined horizontal and vertical lines.

In contrast, the present invention deletes the horizontal and vertical straight line patterns when they are isolated (do not touch) and leaves them in place when they do touch. This preserves the frame line of a table something not done in the prior art. The prior art does not teach or suggest this.

It is submitted that the invention of independent claims distinguishes over the prior art and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

It is submitted that the claims are not taught, disclosed or suggested by the prior art. The claims are therefore in a condition suitable for allowance. An early Notice of Allowance is requested.

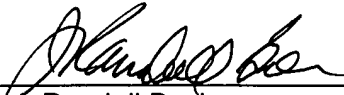
Serial No. 09/755,045

If any further fees, other than and except for the issue fee, are necessary with respect to this paper, the U.S.P.T.O. is requested to obtain the same from deposit account number 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: 4/29/4

By:   
J. Randall Beckers  
Registration No. 30,358

1201 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 700  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
Telephone: (202) 434-1500  
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501